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Source: Union leader

Item:

Date: 1/29/91

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**Teens' Parents
Find Support
Among Selves**

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EXETER — As three teenagers charged in connection with the murder of Gregory Smart entered guilty pleas yesterday, their parents took solace and support from each other.

Elaine Flynn, Vance and Diane Lattime and Pat and Frank Randall were in Rockingham County Superior Court to support their children, some-

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PAMELA SMART

Trial begins next week

TEENS' PARENTS

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thing they have done many times since the three Winnacunnett High School students were arrested in June.

But they were also able to help each other. Once just casual acquaintances, they have become their own support group since they have found a common, if tragic, ground.

"We're all experiencing the same thing, we know what the others are going through," said Elaine Flynn. "No one else knows what we've been going through."

Diane Lattime said she has found comfort from friends and relatives, but acknowledged that the communication between the three sets of parents has been a special help.

"Sometimes we just have coffee," said Pat Randall. "It's always easier to have someone who knows what you're going through."

She said before the arrests of their sons, she had only spoken to one of the other parents on one occasion. It was their com-

mon grief that brought them together.

"We call each other, and when they (the teens) were all at YDC (the Youth Detention Center in Concord) we rode up together," Flynn said. "We went to YDC three times a week faithfully for seven months. As a single parent it was nice for me — I never felt really alone in this."

Flynn said she draws from a deep inner strength that she didn't know she had.

"Without it, I'd probably be a basket case," she said. It's that inner strength that has helped her to pull her family together during the difficult times.

"A friend from California called me and said 'God only gives you as much as you have the strength to bear - you must have a lot of strength,'" Flynn said.

She said she and her other two sons, ages nine and 14, are in family counseling, and that the Seabrook elementary school has made an extra effort to help the two younger boys cope with

the situation.

"We've all been affected."

The Randalls said they have also had difficulty coping with the chain of events that brought them to Exeter yesterday.

"You don't know how you get through this. Sometimes you feel like you'll crack up," said Pat Randall. "You pray a lot."

"It's been pretty tough," said Frank Randall, with emotion in his voice. "He's our only son, our only child."

Mrs. Randall said she only missed two visits with Patrick since he has been arrested. When they are together, she said, they don't talk about the court proceedings. Instead, they talk about music or philosophy, which Mrs. Randall said her son is very interested in.

She said the family uses their closeness to pull together during the difficult times that have passed and are still to come.

"I think of how close we are as a family," she said, voice breaking. "And know the love is there."